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EPARTMENT ON CHURCH AND SOCIETY
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Notes on the contents of this issue.

The discussion of questions of Church and Society has taken a great leap forward in recent years in Latin America. It is the result of new theological thinking and a new awareness of the larger spiritual and ethical problems confronting people in these surging nations. The meeting last year, July 1961, in the small Peruvian town of Huampani (near Lima) of the first Latin American Christian study conference on Church and Society, was attended by 42 persons representing churches and Christian Councils in 16 countries of Latin America. As a result of that meeting there has been formed a Latin American Commission on Church and Society, supported by the official action of five Christian Councils. This body is publishing papers and reports in Spanish on social questions, supporting national Councils in the holding of study conferences and is hoping to hold the second All Latin American Conference on Church and Society in 1964.

It is therefore a pleasure to produce in English some of the papers which have been presented at these recent Latin American study conferences to acquaint our readers with this new thinking. The first essay on The Biblical Basis for the Church's Responsibility in Society by Prof. José Miguez Bonino, was the opening address to the Huampani conference. Prof. Miguez who is President of the Union Theological Seminary in Buenos Aires, was chairman of the conference.

The second article is a translation from Portuguese of the speech by Dr. Celso Furtado, the Director of the Brazilian government development programme for the North East area of Brazil, delivered to the Brazilian Evangelical Study Conference, held at Recife, July 1962.

The third article on The Political and Economic Crisis in Argentine Democracy by Pastor Julio Sabanes was written in May of this year, and provides interesting background information on the situation in Argentina. Rev. Sabanes is a Methodist pastor in Buenos Aires and President of the Committee on Church and Society of the Evangelical Confederation of the River Plate.

The fourth article by Prof. Richard Shaull is also taken from the speech he delivered on this subject to the Huampani Conference on Church and Society. Formerly a missionary worker in Brazil, Dr. Shaull is now professor of ecumenical studies at the Princeton Theological Seminary, in the U.S.A.

BIBLICAL BASIS FOR THE CHURCH'S RESPONSIBILITY IN SOCIETY.

By

Dr. Jose Miguez Bonino

At the opening of the Congress of Life and Work at Stockholm in 1925, a dramatic and significant illustration was given to stress the urgency for the social responsibility of the Church. Imagine a charming festival at the end of the winter, celebrated on the apparently solid surface of a frozen lake. When the fun and merriment are at their height, an alarm is suddenly given: the ice is cracking. There is only one hope: to form a living chain to the shore and move towards it, pulling the others to the safety of firm land. At such a moment who is going to stop to check on his neighbour's religious convictions, political views or philosophical background, before giving him a hand? In the hour of crisis the duty of solidarity cannot be subordinated to theoretical conditions.

In evangelical terms service of one's neighbour has priority over the question, "who is my neighbour?" That is the order in which the ecumenical interest in the Church's social responsibility has found expression: from a concrete, specific concern for situations which required Christian action we have gone on to examine the biblical and theological reasons on which that concern is based. In the conviction that the Church has a responsibility for society, we have devoted energy, time and money to rousing the churches and Christians, and in the process we have searched in the Bible and in the doctrine of the Church for the means of justifying our appeal. It is a law of the Christian faith that we usually first understand the truth through obeying it; it is only afterwards that we discover the theological significance of such action. Missions, fellowship, and worship have precidence over the theology of missions, unity or worship. "Whoever has the will to do the will of God shall know whether my teaching comes from God..." (John 7: 17).

It is equally certain, however, that the risk that the activities undertaken under the urgent pressure of a mandate in which we recognize the voice of God may ultimately become an end in themselves; they may acquire the force of axioms which are not subject to the judgment, the correction and the criticism of the Word of God as witnessed in the Bible. When this happens, the activity in question soon degenerates into a merely human task in which man glorifies himself rather than "Our Father who is in heaven". The Christian life consists in immediate obedience to what we perceive to be God's will, and constant criticism of that obedience in the light of God's Word. Reflection about the biblical basis for the Church's social responsibility should, therefore, accompany the practical action whereby we express that responsibility. We are convinced that God calls us to take responsible action in society: what does God say to us in the Bible about this "conviction" of ours?

This biblical-theological enquiry ought to include at least three basic questions:

What is the source - the motive, the root - of the Church's responsibility for society?

What can we hope for by fulfilling that responsibility? What are the limits and the promise of that action?

What analysis of the social situation can we make in the light of that basic motive and of those limits? The question of a "social ethic".

Of these three questions we will deal here only with the first, not because it is the only one which is important, but because it is often the one which has to be answered first. However, the three questions are interdependent and equally fundamental.

Jesus Christ, the End of This World

Does the Bible provide justification for our concern for social problems? The question is far from rhetorical. Anyone who looks in the Bible for laws applicable to contemporary society will soon have an unpleasant surprise. Does the Bible approve of monogamy or polygamy? Are we to demand an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth? Or are we to turn the other cheek when someone hits us in the face? The Bible seems to reflect, without discrimination, various stages of social development and various types of ethical norms. The confusion increases when we perceive that many of these laws apply to a culture and conditions completely different from our own - a primitive face-to-face society, rural laws, tribal organisation, with the family as the economic unit. Where are we to find the answer to the problems of international politics, of industrial civilisation, of automation, or of modern propaganda? The impossibility of this approach is proved by the quarrels and contradictions between the Christian groups which have tried to proceed in this way, during the course of history.

Neither can we look in the Bible for "principles" of social ethics which can be applied afterwards to every situation. The Bible is curiously devoid of general principles; to try to deduce them from particular situations through a process of generalisation, is to enter into a labyrinth. The homicide of Cain is condemned, while the brutal assassination of Sisera is praised and approved. And the sacrifice of Jephthah's daughter is described without giving us any general ethical principle to enable us to situate and catalogue all these cases. Jesus said it is adultery even to look at someone with desire; but he pardoned the woman taken in adultery; and he did not tell us what underlying principle governed both these actions. The Bible seems to take pleasure in overthrowing all the ethical principles that we put forward as a common denominator for the acts and judgments which it offers us.

The heart of the problem, however, lies deeper. When we turn to the very core of the Bible and are confronted by Jesus Christ, through whom and in whom "all these things were written", far from finding the solution for our problem we find ourselves in an even more serious dilemma. The 19th century, and the first decades of the 20th, thought that a solution could be found in the social teachings of Jesus. In the ethical principles given in the Sermon on the Mount and in the words of Our Lord (before his simple gospel was re-interpreted by Pauline theology) people thought they had a set of formulations which could serve as a basis for a social ethic: the justice of the Kingdom, respect for human personality, the brotherhood of all men under the fatherhood of God. Since then, however, the same historical research has completely disproved the solution which people thought they had found. There is irony in the fact that it was Johannes Weiss (son-in-law of Albert Ritschl, the theologian of the "Kingdom of God" as ethical imperative), and the "philanthropist" Albert Schweitzer, who dealt the fatal blow to the hopes deposited in a "social Christianity" based on the teachings of Jesus. They discovered that the whole message of Jesus was radically and consistently eschatological.

According to Schweitzer's investigations Jesus did not hope for the gradual improvement of the human race under the influence of his teachings; he prophesied the catastrophic dawn of the Kingdom of God through a cataclysm of cosmic dimensions. The heart of Jesus' message is the coming of the Kingdom of God, not through human activity but through the supernatural intervention of God. Later studies have corrected some of the exaggerations of Schweitzer's position, but they have confirmed the eschatological perspective of the New Testament. The Kingdom of God breaks into history unexpectedly: "The Kingdom of God will come without warning. There will be no saying 'Here it is' or 'There it is', because the Kingdom of God will suddenly appear in your midst." (Luke 17: 20; it is easy to see that this is the meaning of the text from its immediate context. Verse 24 says that the coming of Christ will be "like lightning...") Moreover, Jesus seems to manifest a certain impatience with the daily affairs of men: "Who has appointed me to be a judge between you?" (Luke 12: 13). His Kingdom is not of this world (John 18: 36), and the cares of this world distract people from concentration on the Kingdom (Matt. 6: 19-21; 25-34).

Far from softening this eschatological character, the rest of the New Testament consistently develops it. Jesus Christ is the end of this world with its projects and structures. The hour of "this aeon" has come to an end. This world is only a mirage which will soon pass away (I. Cor. 7: 31). Its days are counted and its end is certain. To use metaphors which have become famous: the thunder has sounded in the heavens, another instant and the thunderbolt will fall.(Heim). The decisive battle has been fought. Soon the enemy will be completely routed. (Cullmann). Checkmate is inevitable although the opponent still has a few moves. The clock is worn out, although the pendulum still swings a few times. (Barth). Far from confirming and sublimating the hopes which this world has of continuing and perfecting the existing orders, Jesus Christ brings the end of this world with its corrupt orders. Far from a progress which will one day culminate in Utopia,the world is rushing off the track,

until God's wrath overflows upon the iniquities of earth (Rev. 16: 1) and the horsemen of destruction annihilate the last vestiges of this doomed world. Christ will come like a thief in the night; he will fall upon this corrupt order like an eagle upon its prey (I. Thess. 5: 4; Matt. 25: 28). He is the judge and executor of this world and its structures, rather than its perfecter and transmuter.

The life of the Christian, therefore, is not "of this world". He has been redeemed from it, and his citizenship has been transferred to a sphere where he is out of reach of the ruin which is overtaking the world (Phil. 3: 20; I. Pet. 3: 4). His eyes are fixed on the heavens, not on this world (Col. 3: 1 ff) and he rejects the structure of this world (Rom. 12: 1 ff) which is nothing but a mirage whose reality has already been destroyed.

What shall we do with all this that the students of the New Testament (not always very willingly) tell us? We can, of course, say that all this belongs to an obsolete way of thinking and discard it like the husk which protects the grain. Then we endeavour to find other more adequate bases to support our concern for society. In such a case, however, we have no right to speak of "the biblical bases" for the Church's social responsibility, but of "certain bases which we find in selected biblical passages." The dilemma is a simple one: the social responsibility of the Church is either based on the eschatology of the Bible, or else it has no biblical basis at all. Either Christ is the judge of this world and for that very reason also its hope; or else the world is simply left to its own devices.

If Christ is really the end of this world, if the Cross signified the judgment of the world, why has not the world been already annihilated? Why did not God destroy the world immediately? Why does He not stop the pendulum which is senselessly swinging? Why does He not silence the stupid warriors who persist in fighting their imaginary battle? The Bible answers (surprisingly) "because of His patience". This aeon is "the aeon of God's patience". The meaning of this expression merits more careful analysis than we can give it in these paragraphs.(1) But it does not imply in any way an intermediate period during which the Throne of the world remains (so to speak) vacant. God has not abdicated His Throne. Quite the contrary: Jesus Christ is, without question, Lord of the world. All things have been put under his feet (Acts. 2: 34-36; I. Cor. 15: 25,27; Eph. 1: 22; Heb. 2: 8 etc.) It is certain that we do not see empirically, that all things are subject to Christ; but in faith we already see Christ triumphant "at the right hand of God" (Heb. 2: 5-10).

The existence of this world is not prolonged because of impotence or "hesitation" on God's part, but because of His "patience" which "does not wish that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance" (II. Peter 3: 9).

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1) Cullmann has given the biblical bases for this subject in his book Christ and Time.

It is a patience "for the purpose of salvation" (ibid. v. 15). The present period is the period of history in which man makes his decision. God gives an opportunity to listen and accept, so that the Church can proclaim the message of the Gospel, so that in this way the new human race may be built up which is to inherit the Kingdom. It is therefore essential that before the End the Gospel be proclaimed to all nations (Mark 13: 10). Then the End will come (Matt. 24: 14). It is the aeon of God's generosity in which the Church, under the power of the Holy Spirit, invites men to change completely (to repent), as this is essential for entering the new world of God which has broken in in Jesus Christ, and which will very soon take the place of the putrefaction of the old world. The bold affirmation of the New Testament - so bold as to reach the point of absurdity, but no less emphatic and unequivocal - is that the whole of human history since Jesus Christ (with all its tragedies and triumphs, its hopes and disillusionments, its structures, its culture, its revolutions and wars, its armistices and alliances) has only one meaning: it is an opportunity to listen to and receive the Gospel. The world is nothing more (and nothing less) than the stage on which is being played out the drama of the call of the Gospel and the response of faith. Apart from this drama, history has no meaning or significance.

The consequence of this formidable affirmation is no less astonishing. It is admirably summed up in I. Tim. 2: 1-4:

> "First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all men, for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life, godly and respectful in every way. This is good, and it is acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour, who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth."

What is the connection between verses 3 and 4 (the latter is underlined). There is an apparent break in the sense, a glaring non-sequitur. The reasoning is as follows: (1) The Christian must pray, he must give thanks to God, he must intercede for the authorities; (2) his prayer is that God should grant that people live in peace, order and justice; (3) he must pray for these things because they are God's own will; (4) God desires these things because He wants all men to be saved. This is the only explanation of the connection between verses 3 and 4, and consequently of the meaning of the whole passage. Order, justice, peace and freedom which can be implanted in this world through the social structures are the necessary guarantees for proclaiming the Gospel, a sort of "preserving order" which enables man to survive as a responsible human being who can listen to the Word and respond to it. The state (in this case the Roman Empire) is completely subordinated to the message of salvation in Christ.

Here we find the point where Christianity is concerned about "the old world". It is only a provisional order, but that does not mean that it has no significance. Its meaning, however, does not lie in itself but in its relation with the order of God's ultimate design, manifest in Jesus Christ. Christianity takes seriously the temporal order because it is bound up with God's final plan. It is completely beyond the scope of the present paper to try to situate this statement in the perspective of a complete biblical theology. I would merely like to stress three

important facts:

(1) The theological perspective presented to us here tallies absolutely with the nature of God's action as described in Scripture (especially in the Old Testament): there God shakes empires, raises peoples up, creates and deposes kings in order to liberate, lead, judge and discipline His people. The history of the world draws its meaning from the history of salvation.

(2) From this perspective history does not lose its significance unless (contrary to the New Testament) salvation is conceived in purely individualistic terms. We are not told that God maintains this world in existence merely as a "hunting-ground" for personal evangelism; we are told that He does so in order to bring about the final consummation: through calling men to respond in faith, His purpose is to create the new human race which is to inherit the "new heaven and the new earth".

(3) This focalisation also makes clear the dialectic relation between "church" and "world". On the one hand the Church appears like the bearer of history, the focal point of the relation between God and the world, as God's people have always been throughout the Bible. On the other hand the Church is subject to God's design for the world (the creation of the "new human race" in Jesus Christ), it is the instrument of the history of salvation. In this perspective it can (and must) be said that the Church exists because of the world, although it would be more accurate to say that they both exist because of the Kingdom of God, i.e. because of the redeemed humanity which is the final objective of God's design, as revealed and carried out in Jesus Christ, and which is moving towards its final consummation - the return of Our Lord.

The Christian, The Old World and the Kingdom

What significance has this eschatological context in the Church's attitude to the world? The Church in the New Testament did not draw further conclusions. At that time the public service rendered by the Church had to find expression almost exclusively in the form of prayer and intercession. In the second century some apologists insisted that Christians maintain the world together by their prayers. But anyone who really prays for something and subscribes to that prayer with "Amen" will be compelled to do something about it as soon as the opportunity presents itself. Participation in maintaining the structures of society "so that we may live a peaceful life..." is the inevitable expression of a sincere prayer, as the New Testament points out to us. Indeed such participation (with all its opportunities and problems) would very soon have to appear in the history of the Church.

What significance has that participation? Here again we have to seek the criterion in the same nature of the temporal order as it serves the history of salvation. Two aspects then stand out, one negative, the other positive. The first is defined as the character of preservation in the old order. Its function is to make life possible, so that man can hear and receive the message of the Gospel. Traditionally this has included peace, a certain order and a minimum of freedom for the Church. But deeper consideration would show us that this

concept is nothing less than the very idea of human dignity: a decent human life, opportunity of access to the fulness of the human possibilities through which God calls man. The psychological barriers created by poverty, oppression, injustice, fear, insecurity, ignorance or a degraded form of life are as real as the suppression of freedom of speech. (In this connection it is worthwhile to study carefully what Canon Wickam has said about psychological and sociological obstacles which prevent the proletariat from hearing the Gospel). It is not merely a problem of communication; the fact is that certain sectors of society are under the dominance of "structures" which isolate them from the proclamation of the Gospel. The destruction of these structures is part of the creation of "a peaceful, ordered life". On the other hand this same question should be studied from the angle of the nature of faith. It is only the "mature" person who can fully perceive the completely radical character of the Gospel, when it has been freed from the danger of being misinterpreted as a simple call to relieve the cares "of this world". Barth graphically expressed this years ago, when he said that it was the function of the Church "so to cure the temporal ills of man as to expose his eternal one". What we ask, in praying for the world, is that all the human possibilities should be opened to all men, and kept open, so that they can have the fulness of a responsible, mature human existence. This is the "preserving" function of the orders of the old world.

This is what we would call the "conservative" aspect of Christian participation in social responsibility. But this perspective must be complemented by another, also in the same eschatological context. The New Testament calls this "intermediate" period, (now looked at from the viewpoint of the coming Kingdom) "the age of the Church". This is the period in the history of mankind, the essential content of which is the proclamation of the Kingdom, and the central agent is the preaching community, the missionary people of God: the Church. The meaning of world history, the goal of the transformation of the world, the ultimate disappearance of the world as a terminus a quo rather than terminus ad quem, must be found in the community of the Church.

In the New Testament the Church is not confused with the Kingdom, and therefore it cannot claim for itself the glory and the power of the Kingdom. Its ministry cannot be the anticipation of the sovereign glory of the Kingdom; it is the continuation of the ministry of God's Suffering Servant. Or perhaps it would be better to say that the glory and power of God are manifest in the service of the Church in analogy with their manifestation in the earthly life of Jesus: through the sacrificial service of love. We have been sent to the world as Jesus was sent to the world (John 17: 18), namely in the form of a servant, fully assuming human life, not refusing the company of sinners. This theme has been abundantly stressed in contemporary theology and we need not dwell upon it at length. (It suffices to recall the admirable pages in Bonhoeffer's "Ethics" on the concept of "Gleichgestaltung" = conformity). But it may be opportune to point out an aspect of this subject which we often forget. By stressing the difference between the suffering ministry of Jesus and his sovereign glory, we often forget the unity between the two things. Suffering service is not different from the glorious reality; rather it is the form which the latter takes within the structures of this corrupt world. The suffering of Christ is the testimony

of the world to come that it is not dominated and subject to the form of this world (Rom. 12: 1). It is the triumph of the Kingdom over "the powers of this world" which lost their power at Calvary. It is therefore also necessary to say that the Church's sacrificial service of love in the world is its testimony to "the new world of God". As such, at the same time it shows that true character of human community. Expressed in less theological terms: in this world the Church bears witness of God's Kingdom not only in its preaching but in the whole of its conduct which "is in conformity with the new aeon". The power of the Holy Spirit enables the Church to manifest the fruits of the new world in the midst of "the order of the transient world" (Romans 12; Gal. 5; Col. 3).

This order of the new aeon is what Jesus described to his disciples in the Sermon on the Mount. It can be summed up in one word: AGAPE. In the midst of the bankrupt world with its self-love and its pride, Christianity and the Church bear witness in word and deed (which are inseparable and which interpret one another) of a new principle which is completely different: the love which devotes itself spontaneously without regard for the dignity of the person loved.

This love, however, is practised amid the conditions of this world. It must operate within the structures of this world, and through them, otherwise it will be abstract and unreal - and in that case it is not the love of Christ. One's neighbour is not a "disincarnate soul"; he is always an actual person, a subject of a certain country, a worker, business man or state official, an intellectual; he is black, yellow or white, a man with human needs - economic, social, psychological and spiritual - involved in his struggle for freedom, justice, dignity and right. It is not possible to love him apart from his circumstances, because a man is always "himself and his circumstances" (Ortega y Gasset). This is the fate of love: the need to venture into the structures of the old world where one's neighbour lives - our neighbour to whom we have been indissolubly bound in Jesus Christ. (Nor is it possible to reduce our concern for our neighbour to the personal level: the beggar who knocks at my door is the final result of a long process. His position is due to a combination of factors - economic, social, ethnic and psychological; the gears and pressures of society have ground, and finally the alarm-signal appears. What would be more stupid than to turn off the alarm signal and to suppose that in this way we have put the machinery in order again? That is certainly not an intelligent form of love.)

When love enters the structures of society this always means entering ambiguous situations. In this world love can only work within the corrupt orders which are destined to disappear. Just as in a dense cloud of smoke the sun's light acquires a red tinge, so amid the dense structures of the fallen world Christian love acquires the grey tinge of compromise, imperfection, sometimes of violence. Refusal to accept these compromises means, ultimately, refusing to love in this world, pretending to reserve the practice of love for the future life; in other words, it means rejecting the witness of Jesus Christ. The nature of the new world, the Kingdom (which is summed up in love) can only be manifest imperfectly through the structures of the old world. By participating in the old world, the Christian "bears the burdens of others" (in addition to his own. For it would be dangerous to forget that the structures of the old world, and of the old

man, also penetrate into Christianity and the Church, and that all Christian action is ambiguous at its very roots, and not only in its relations with the world around it).

Seen thus in the light of love the two forms of participation in society are negative and positive not merely "permissible" or "advisable"; they are unavoidable mandates imposed by the Christian witness. Far from constituting an alternative to the proclamation of the Gospel, they are integral elements in proclaiming the Gospel until the Kingdom comes.

REFLECTIONS ON THE BRAZILIAN PRE-REVOLUTION

By

Dr. Celso Furtado

In my contacts with university young people throughout Brazil during the last year, I have observed that their spirits are dominated by great anxieties. They are sharply aware that the country is moving toward far reaching transformations; that under our feet, like a deep current, inscrutable forces are at work. And all, or almost all, young people desire to understand what is happening, to participate consciously in these transformations, to assume an active position and be able to contribute to the moulding of a future which belong primarily to them. Although often undecided or insecure, young people are confident; and they are demanding of all of us a clear definition of position: a courageous identification with them both in objectives and methods in the struggle for the conquest of the future.

Allow me to present some reflections around the questions that were formulated for me by young men and women who have recently graduated from the universities in different parts of Brazil. . . .

The first of these questions has to do with the tremendous social cost of the economic development which is taking place in Brazil. Economic analysis limit itself to exposing this reality factually. We know that the development of the last decades, of which we are so proud, brought no benefits at all to three-fourths of the population of the country. Its principal characteristic has been a growing social and geographic concentration of income. The great mass of rural workers, who constitute the majority of the Brazilian population, have received practically no benefits from this development. Worse still, these masses saw their standard of living go down, relatively speaking, over against that of those social groups engaged in commerce and other services. The number of industrial workers, who represent a sort of middle class in Brazilian society, grew numerically in relative terms, but without any significant improvement in their standard of living. Here also their situation became comparatively worse, as they saw the ascension of other social groups with higher incomes.

The extremely negative social aspects of development are not limited to the concentration of income. In fact, because of our anachronistic agrarian structure this development brought about, in many places, a relative increase of income from the land which went to parasitic groups. In the absence of a conscious political effort to preserve the authority of the state and its social character, a structure of subsidies was improvised, in the name of development, which often rewarded first of all superfluous investments. This permitted - due to the given distribution of rent and comparative prices - an even greater concentration in the hands of privileged groups. Through outright donations of capital, credit and exchange subsidies, great social wealth was transferred to a few hands.

On the political-administrative plane, the distortions were even more flagrant. The increase of state action, brought about by development, unaccompanied by necessary basic reforms in the state itself, augmented greatly the coefficient of waste. On the other hand, the increasing activity in the field of investments together with this inefficiency, created conditions favourable to the illicit appropriation of capital at the expense of the people. The large public works contracts came to be a source of rapid accumulation of fortunes inside and outside government circles.

I understand the revolt of the younger generation before this picture; those who are supposed to represent the people, elected by those who have contracts for public works; the alliance of the feudal machine with the national budget which produces legislators who will vote new sums for the same purposes. These things which were formerly the hidden rules of the game are now visible to all.

At the bottom of our present unrest, we find this simple truth: we know where lie the errors of our disordered development; we know that it is within our power to eradicate them or limit them and we are now conscious of all this. That is why we feel responsible, and also restless.

A Philosophy of Action

This brings us to the second point to which I would like to give attention: the need for a philosophy which orients our action. Many people here and abroad, have asked me why there exists such a great penetration of Marxism among Brazilian young people today, the reason is a simple one: Marxism in any of its variants, makes it possible to translate the diagnosis of social reality into norms of action. We must examine this matter with complete frankness if we want to maintain an effective dialogue with the youth of this generation who are idealistic and active. What sort of Marxism is it that attracts a large number of our young people? I believe that we can characterize it in a few attitudes, independent of the analysis on which they may be based:

a) The recognition that the social order we now have is based, to a large extent, on the exploitation of man by man, maintaining the well being of one class, which includes many idle people and parasites, by the misery of the great majority.

b) The recognition that social reality is historical, therefore, in permanent mutation in which the present order is being transcended, and

c) The recognition that it is possible to identify the strategic factors which act in the social process and which open the door to a conscious plan of social reconstruction. . . .

If we go to the essential core of this philosophy, we find, on the one hand, the desire to liberate man from all those burdens which socially enslave him, permitting him to affirm himself in the plenitude of his potentialities; on the other hand, we discover an optimistic attitude as regards the conscious self-determination of human communities. It is a matter, in the last instance, of a superior stage of humanism, since it puts man in the centre of its concern and at

the same time recognizes that the plenitude of human development can be reached only through the rational orientation of social relations.

Whatever may be the name attributed to it, it is impossible to combat this doctrine head on, since it expresses the deep longings of modern man. Its most vigorous roots come from the humanism of the Renaissance which once again focussed on the human person; its congenital optimism emanates from the Industrial Revolution which gave man control over the external world.

If we hope to maintain a fruitful dialogue with the new generation, we must agree on what is really fundamental. . . . .

I believe that as regards the material evolution of society, these objectives can be easily expressed, in terms of our analysis above, in the words humanism and optimism. In more current language: liberty and economic development.

I have used the word humanism because liberty can be understood also in terms of the individualism of the Nineteenth Century, in which the individual was often set over against the social. But let us have no doubt that what is in the centre of all the aspirations and ideals of the present younger generation is an authentic humanism. What disturbs youth is the anti-human aspect of our development. It is the fact that the contrast between waste and misery becomes more acute every day....Economic development is, in the strict sense, a means. However, it constitutes an end in itself, an irreductible element in the manner of thought of the younger generation, the certainty that the enlargement of the material bases of social and individual life is an essential condition for full human development.....

Ends and Means

We now reach the central point of our reflections: having defined the authentic objectives, how can we agree on action? How to avoid that struggle for intermediate or secondary objectives leads us to lose sight of the true ends. This problem is extremely complex, since the historical experience of the last decades created an apparent choice for the underdeveloped countries, between individual liberty and rapid material development of society.

Indeed, it is a more or less evident fact that the rapid material development of the Soviet Union, until recently an underdeveloped country, was partially based on anti-human methods. The appropriation of agricultural production, needed to finance industrial development, was done manus militari, through compulsory collectivization and violent repression of all resistance...Whatever the reasons given for this, it was done because it offered the easiest administrative method. And for this administrative facility, we know what an enormous price in human lives was paid. Even leaving aside the painful Soviet agrarian experience, we must recognize, on universal evidence, that the rapid economic development of the countries with a collectivistic economy has been accompanied by types of socio-political organization in which all forms of individual liberty have been restricted beyond the limits which we consider tolerable.

It must be recognized however that, from the point of view of the masses in the underdeveloped countries, the argument about the loss of individual liberty taken from the experience of the socialist countries has been of very limited value. These masses cannot understand the significance of this argument because they never had any access to superior forms of public life. Even more, the supposed alternative between liberty and rapid development can have dangerous results for liberty as a collective aspiration, since it can be then inferred that the freedom which is accessible to a minority is paid for by the sacrifice of the well being of the great majority. If we should come to admit as valid the thesis that the economic development of the socialist countries was the counterpart of restricting civil liberties, we should also accept as true the corrolary that the price of the freedom we enjoy is the retarding of general economic development.

Even less effective, from the point of view of the masses in the underdeveloped countries, is the more direct argument that the development of the socialist countries is being obtained at enormous human cost, including forms of semi-slavery. They know, from the hard experience of misery in which they live, the extremely high price they pay by continuing underdeveloped. How many millions of lives are consumed by hunger and physical exhaustion provoked by primitive forms of work, before they reach full maturity? How many millions of human beings surround us who have no access to education or any other opportunity of participating in the common and higher manifestations of the human spirit? Few of us are conscious of the profoundly anti-human character of underdevelopment. When we understand this we can explain easily why the masses are disposed to do everything to go beyond it. If the price to be paid for the freedom of a few is the misery of the many, then let us be sure that we have slight probability of remaining free.

....In this debate between those who defend freedom and those who strive for economic development, there has been much confusion. It is especially important, if we want to go beyond it, to make a clear distinction between the ultimate objectives, which we can never give up in the struggle for the perfecting of forms of social living - which were incorporated into the social philosophy of Marx, but which constitute elements of a much more ample conception of the world which has been developing in the West since the Renaissance - and the techniques which have been elaborated for the total or partial achievement of these objectives. Marx-Leninism is one of these techniques. It postulates the inevitability of violent revolution, led by a party of professionals in revolution, and requires that the new order be guaranteed by a dictatorial regime which will last for an indefinite time during the period of transition. It is necessary not to forget that this technique was forged and perfected in the struggle for the destruction of a socio-political structure which was totally rigid, the Czarist regime. Historic experience of the last decades has demonstrated that, when applied against other rigid structures - Nationalist China during and after the Japanese occupation and Batista's Cuba are conspicuous examples - this revolutionary technique, which demands a spartan discipline at the base and the audaciousness of leadership of an Alexander, can be highly effective.

The same cannot be said, however, as regards open societies. The example of Western Europe seems to be conclusive: large party machines of Marx-Leninist orientation were traumatized before a social-political reality which was in permanent change. The explanation of this historic fact is not difficult; Marx-Leninism identifies the state...with the dictatorship of one class, the bourgeoisie The unity of revolutionary action is facilitated by a clear definition of objective But, from the moment in which the state becomes more than a simple class dictatorship, becomes a composite system, representing the various classes even though under the direction of one class, that revolutionary technique loses its efficiency. The need to discriminate between the good and the bad in the acts of the state, from the point of view of one class, demands a capacity of adaptation which a monolithic revolutionary party cannot have. From historical experience it can be inferred that only where the revolution of a Marxist-Leninistic type succeeded has there been profound social changes, as the efficient cause of rapid economic development. On the other hand, the same historical experience indicates that a revolution of this type has occurred only where the political-social structure was rigid and anachronistic...

Duality of Political-Social Structure of Brazil

Let us now consider the Brazilian problem directly. In the light of historica experience, it is not difficult to explain why the peasant class in Brazil is much more susceptible to the influence of revolutionary techniques of a Marx-Leninistic type than the worker class, even though, from the point of view of orthodox Marxism, the latter should be the vanguard of the revolutionary movement. The reason is that our society is open for the worker class, but not for the peasants. In fact, our political system permits the working class to be organized in order to struggle for its objectives within the rules of the democratic order. The situation of the peasants is, however, totally different. As they have no rights, they can have no legal grievances. If they organize, it is inferred that they have become subversive. The conclusion which we are forced to draw is that Brazilian society is rigid in one large segment: that formed by the rural sector. And as regards this segment, the thesis is valid that Marx-Leninistic techniques of revolution are efficient.

We arrive thus to a conclusion which is of extraordinary importance for us: the existence of a duality in the revolutionary process in Brazil To the degree that we live in an open society, the major social objectives are being gradually attained. To the degree that we live in a rigid society, these objectives tend to be reached only by a cataclysmic rupture.

I would like to make one more reflection about revolutionary methods: the Marx-Leninistic political order based on the substitution of one class dictatorship by another constitutes a regression, from the political point of view, when applied to societies which have attained more complex forms of social existence. This regression means in reality the sacrifice of the very objectives we have defined as essential. If it is true that an enlarging material base brought about through development facilitates a fuller life for man, it is no less true that the form of socio-political organization constitutes the context

within which the superior manifestations of man's life are affirmed. If it is probable that in the future full material development and forms of socio-political organization capable of permitting the full affirmation of human values may co-exist, it does not necessarily work out that way in the historic stage in which we find ourselves. To achieve superior forms of socio-political organization constitutes a conquest at least as definitive as that of achieving high levels of material development. From this point of view, in an open society, where complex forms of social existence have been attained, a revolution of the Marx-Leninist type represents an obvious political regression. Historic experience has indicated that when this happens, as is the case of some countries of Central Europe, socialism as a form of humanism is perverted. As it is not possible to pass from an open society to a dictatorship without creating a climate of social frustration, a reversal of values occurs on many different planes....

If we desire to arrive at the heart of the problems whoch we have to face, we should formulate clearly the question: What possibility is there that the Brazilian revolution will be brought about by Marx-Leninist methods? I believe that two possibilities exist that this may happen. The first is bound up with the agrarian problem. We should not forget that more than half of the population of Brazil is directly bound to the agrarian sector. To the degree that it is preserved with its present rigidity, any movement which arises in the rural areas will tend to assimilate rapidly the revolutionary techniques of Marx-Leninism. We have thus, in the current of the Brazilian revolutionary process, an important sector which offers an opportunity to Marx-Leninism, which could prevail in certain conditions....

The second possibility for the establishment of a revolution of the Marx-Leninist type is related to a socio-political regression. We have seen that this type of revolution is very unlikely in an open society, unless it be imposed from outside, as happened in some countries of Central Europe. However, we should not exclude the possibility of a regression in our socio-political organism. The imposition of a dictatorship of the right, making the whole socio-political structure rigid, would create conditions propitious for an effective revolutionary regimentation of the Marx-Leninist type....

Directions for Action

I believe that we have advanced sufficiently to dare to suggest certain principles that can guide us in political action. We will have no difficulty in agreeing on the fundamental objective which is: man in his fullness, freed from all forms of exploitation and domination. We are, above all, humanists. This objective can be reached only if we are organized socially to attain and keep an high rhythm of economic development, and if this development is directed by right social criteria. If we want to carry forward this programme in the present Brazilian situation, important and decisive modifications must be made in our basic structures. As we are not prepared for these modifications and the collective anxieties become sharper every day, development becomes an urgent matter of political action and we now begin to live an authentic pre-revolutionary phase. In this way, the techniques of social transformation and revolutionary methods now occupy the first place in political concern.

In the face of the grade of development already reached by our social and political structure, we should consider as regressive those revolutionary methods which necessarily lead to dictatorial political forms under the direction of social classes, ideological groups or rigid party structures. In order to avoid the dominance of revolutionary techniques of this type, it is necessary to

a) Prevent all forms of regression in our socio-political system, and

b) Create conditions for a rapid and effective change in the anachronistic agrarian structure of the country.

The basic task of the present moment consists, therefore, in giving greater elasticity to the structures. We must move audaciously in the direction of constitutional changes which will permit the carrying out of agrarian reform and modify, at the base, the administrative machinery of the state, the fiscal system and the banking structures. We must subordinate state action to a clear definition of objectives of economic and social development, it being the task of Parliament to establish directives but not permit local politicians to have control over funds. We must authorize the government to punish effectively those who misuse public funds, to control superfluous consumption, and to give greater dignity to the work of the servants of the state. We should have a legal statute which will discipline the action of foreign capital, subordinating it to the objectives of economic development and making it independent of politics. The government should have at its disposal the means necessary to known the origin of all resources used to support those organs which orient public opinion and, above all, we should have a plan of economic and social development which is equal to our possibilities and in accord with the longings of our people.

What should we do to transform these desires and aspirations into norms of action? I believe that the most immediate task is to organize public opinion so that it can manifest itself organically. It belongs to students, workers, businessmen and younger intellectuals to initiate open debate about that which we expect of the political organs of the country. The most complex problems should be the object of systematic studies by groups of specialists and their conclusions submitted to general debate. The country is mature enough to begin to reflect on its own destiny. Out of such general debates and manifestations of public opinion should arise the platforms for the political campaigns this year aiming at the election of a new congress.

I am convinced that the leadership of this great movement for the mobilization of national public opinion around the authentic movement of national development belongs once again to youth.

THE POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC CRISIS IN ARGENTINE DEMOCRACY

by

Julio R. Sabanes

It is extremely difficult for someone who is on the scene to understand the Argentine crisis; the situation is very complex and becomes more complex from moment to moment. It is even more difficult to understand it from outside Argentina where often the most that is known is that at the end of March a new political-military crisis was precipitated, by the opposition political parties and the armed forces, requesting the resignation of President Frondizi, who, upon his refusal to resign, was deposed by the commanders-in-chief of the three branches of the armed services (Army, Navy and Air Force), the executive office being assumed by the president of the Senate, Dr. Guido, a political colleague of the deposed president, (who had already occupied the presidential office, in the Casa Rosada or "Pink House" in Buenos Aires, during the frequent - some very prolonged - trips of Frondizi abroad, (Europe, United States, Canada and the Far East, and neighbouring South American countries.))

Under President Frondizi Argentina was establishing herself little by little in world affairs. His contacts abroad, even though they had not been brilliant nor extraordinarily successful, had given evidence of a serious and responsible policy in international relations. He had revealed himself as an "intellectual" in politics, and as a good student of socio-economic affairs in the world and Latin America, as well as in Argentina. From the fall of Peron in September of 1955 to the present, international prestige of the country had slowly risen, correcting the irresponsible and uncivilized practices both in political life and in international commerce, which characterized the government of Juan D. Peron. As far as world opinion is concerned what transpired at the end of March is inexplicable and signifies a backward step. We seem to have returned to the instability and the frequent crises characteristic of the South American republics, representing very little that is "republican" and much of "caudillismo" (strong man), military barracks, palace revolutions and coup d'etats.

Nevertheless, the matter is not as simple as it appears at first sight. The situation seems to be calm for the moment as we enter a period of watchful waiting because the president of the nation holds office only provisionally, in accordance with the law; and he is a civilian who has called elections for next year, indicating that it is even possible that they may be held. But the events of March and those that have followed are something that many foresaw some months ago due to the "power factors" which operate in Argentine politics and due also to errors in domestic policy of President Frondizi and his government. Eight months ago - October 25, 1961 - in one of the evening papers of Buenos Aires, there appeared a caricature which represented the ex-president digging a grave in a cemetary. The inscription at the head of the grave read "Arthur Frondizi" and the general caption of the cartoon was "Self-Service?". But to understand the meaning of this cartoon it is necessary to consider recent political history and explain something about political institutions in Argentina.

Some Political Antecedents

During ten years (1946-1955), General Juan D. Peron, was the principal figure in the nationalist revolution and became the master and dictator of the Argentine Republic. With a propaganda technique faithfully copied from the totalitarian regimes of Europe, a technique which Peron learned in the Fascist School of Milan, he won the support of the majority of the rural and urban working class; and also some sectors of the middle class and the new industrial bourgeosie which developed and enriched itself thanks to the rapid and somewhat unbalanced industrial development, an industrial development hastened by the economic isolation occasioned by the Second World War which impeded regular foreign trade in manufactured articles. Peron also took advantage of two other factors 1) the increasing wealth of the country during the Second World War. (Because of the War Argentina was able to find in the markets of North America and Europe a ready demand for her abundant agricultural and livestock exports, which meant that at the end of the Second World War the country had two billion dollars in credits. Peron rose to power when the country had reached a new peak of prosperity and could speak of "a more just distribution of the wealth" because there was wealth to distribute". 2) The backwardness of the Argentine social security (which in many cases did not consist in the lack of social legislation but the failure to fulfill and apply such laws) a situation created by the blindness of the conservative classes which had governed until then, and neglect and indigence which was the lot of the majority of the proletariat - urban and rural - (especially the latter which at this moment attracted by the conditions of work in the cities, began to form the belts of misery around the large Argentine cities.

After offering new hope to the masses by having been Secretary of Labour in the revolutionary government from 1943 to 1945, Peron was elected President of the Nation in 1946 by 55% of the Argentine electorate (at that time only men voted). With this government he began to build the structure of the totalitarian regime. Opposition political leaders were frequently accused and jailed; all of the "non official" newspapers and magazines were closed or taken over by the government; the radios remained at the exclusive service of the State; the workers were obliged to affiliate with the official unions for each branch of labour and these in turn had to belong to the only central workers organization. Army and police were totally in the hands of Peron's followers, and all disagreement with the regime were prohibited. Many cases of torture for political reasons were reported and even the deaths of some of those who opposed the regime.

Peron maintained his popularity by means of a demagogic quality undergirded by his wife, Eva Peron, who organized and maintained a foundation of social aid, to which employers, workers and all of the sectors of the country, were obligated to contribute, was the Lady Bountiful of the government; the Foundation monopolized the entire task of beneficence, charity and relief creating the impression that all of this work was the product of the good heartedness of the governing couple. And it was truly a "governing couple" because she came to have enormous influence in matters of government, naming and removing ministers, ambassadors, governors of provinces, etc. Eva Peron died, while still young, in 1952, just when the economic difficulties were beginning for the regime. The years of the "fat cows" had ended and the immense Argentine reserve had been squandered. The beneficiaries, of the regime and the relatives of Eva Peron had

filled their coffers and had removed millions of dollars from the country; the demagogory had corrupted the habits of work and the discipline of the people.

General Peron wanted to reform the national constitution, in order to be able to perpetuate himself in power. The Argentine Constitution of 1853 established that the President of the Nation may govern six years and cannot be re-elected except after an intervening term of office. Peron succeeded in 1949 in removing the prohibition to re-election and added to the Constitution other nationalistic clauses, and some demogogic declarations.

After 1952 the economic difficulties became steadily more serious. Agricultural and livestock production continued to decline. The export of agricultural and meat products had provided more than 90% of the foreign exchange that Argentina obtained from its overseas trade. But Peron neglected the rural areas alleging that his enemies, the minority of rich, cattle-raising landlords, had always exploited the Argentine people and were allied with foreign interests. He was not aware that although the great landlords no longer made large profits, none of them were ruined. They had begun to invest their capital in the new industry (and also in financial speculations) while thousands and thousands of middle-sized and small cattle raisers and farmers were being ruined. The people began to abandon the countryside and in the Pampa regions agricultural colonies of two to three hundred families were reduced in a few years to thirty or forty families. As exports fell the country was unable to pay its foreign debts; the nationalized transportation systems and public utilities (gas, telephones) and the non-nationalized services (electricity) deteriorated rapidly; with the result that in this country of wheat and cattle only black bread was available and no meat was sold one day and a half per week.

The moral corruption of the regime increased rapidly also. Peron himself and his closest supporters neglected the concerns of government and spent long hours of leisure in sporting events and parties with young men and women of the student organizations of the regime, attracting the young people with all kinds of prizes and special concessions such as motor bikes and motor scooters, trips and outings. (When Peron was deposed a young man was seen riding along one of the principal streets of Buenos Aires on a motor bike to which he had affixed a sign reading "I bought this myself"; it was the custom to ask anyone who possessed a motor scooter or bicycle, "Did Peron buy it for you". The Catholic Church - which during the first few years favoured and supported Peron and his regime (in exchange for certain advantages) - reacted against this policy of ensnaring its youth. Their first policy, of support of Peron in exchange for certain advantages, was unworthy of the Argentine Catholic Church; it provoked the resentment of many lay catholics of a democratic and liberal spirit, and also of some of the outstanding priests and bishops of the Church. The catholic religious instruction in the State schools - this was one of the advantages Peron had granted to the Church, since in Argentina after 1884, education has been completely "lay" in the primary schools as well as in the secondary schools and universities - was denied by Peron at the beginning of 1955 and he also began to threaten to bring about the separation of Church and State which however did not actually take place. (The Argentine Constitution says in Article 2, that "the Nation supports Apostolic Roman Catholic worship", although in other Articles the total liberty of worship is guaranteed).

The tension between Peron and the Church became so great that the government adopted the extreme course of dismissing some bishops, others were expelled from the country. On the 16th June, 1955, after a revolutionary attempt on the part of the Navy, which failed, the Peronist hordes burned and destroyed the principal Catholic churches of Buenos Aires and other cities of the country, made possible by the passivity and complacency of the police and firemen, who were only concerned that the fires should not extend to neighbouring buildings. This and other abuses were more than the country could tolerate. The working masses, because of the economic difficulties and unemployment, had already lost their enthusiasm for their leader, although they still believed in him and distrusted his enemies. The democratic civilian forces (conservatives, radicals, socialists, etc.) had maintain their clandestine resistance during these years. To this opposition was added the force of an offended Catholic sentiment and this turned the balance. Peron underestimated the capacity of Catholic sentiment to influence vast sectors of Argentines, even among the working class. The day following the burning of the churches, thousands and thousands of persons, especially women from all social classes, went to deposit flowers in front of the burned churches as a silent testimony of repudiation of the outrage which had been committed.

It was in this moment that Peron felt his government stagger. Then, in another of his feigned gestures he sought with his adversaries and invited the opposition political leaders to present over the radio their plan for bringing peace to the country. In July 1955, for the first time in more than 12 years, the country heard again on the radio, the voice of an opposition political leader. It is noteworthy that the first voice should be that of Arthur Frondizi, chief of the principal opposition group, the Radical Party. Then in the following weeks, leaders of other parties spoke. All proposed that the basic liberties be restored and there be the necessary political and economic reforms to put the country once again on the road to democracy. The reaction of Peron was violent; he argued that he had offered an open hand to his adversaries, but they had returned the closed fist. On August 31, 1955, he made a passionate speech in which he authorize every Peronist to kill with impunity every opponent, and threatened the opposition with these words: "...for every one of us who falls, five of them will fall". This speech is remembered in Argentina as the five-for-one speech. Never had a president preached civil war in this fashion. It was significant that no one of his supporters obeyed him; they also were crushed by the impact of this speech which demonstrated the weakness of a dictator who had already lost all authority.

Sixteen days later a civilian amd military revolution broke out, headed by the Navy and part of the Army. Its centres were in the provinces of Cordoba, Mendoza and Corrientes, and in the Naval bases of the southern part of the country on the Atlantic Ocean. Three days later when the fleet threatened to bombard Buenos Aires, Peron resigned, and two days later he took refuge in the Paraguayan Embassy, being transported to a small Paraguayan warship that was in the port of Buenos Aires. The new government respected the rights of asylum, and Peron has since then been a refugee in different Latin American countries, and lately in Spain.

The government that arose from the revolution of 1955 was a civil and military government, of rather conservative tendencies in economic matters and liberal in terms of political affairs. Its leader became General Pedro E. Aramburu. This man and his supporters saw that the mission of their government was merely provisional; that it ought not to introduce changes in political matters, but rather prepare the country for the elections of a constitutional government. Aramburu intervened in the Central Labour Union Organization, a Peronist bulwark, and re-organized the unions. He dissolved also the Peronist Party and the Social Aid Foundation of Eva Peron. He called a constituting assembly that once again put into effect the Constitution of 1853, adding only some social rights, and after re-organizing certain aspects of the political and economic administration of the country, called for elections of president and vice-president of the nation, Parliament and provincial and municipal governments.

A Constitutional Government

The government of General Aramburu recuperated, in part, the lost international prestige of the country, and offered the high example of military rule that calls free elections and respects the results, turning power over to constitutional government. This was a notable achievement, especially for Latin America, where every revolutionary government has tended to perpetuate itself in power and transform itself into a dictatorship. The government of Aramburu established a decree by which none of the participants of the provisional government could present themselves as candidates in the elections, which in fact undercut completely any personal ambition on the part of those who comprised the provisional government.

Since the Peronist Party had been prohibited, the hundreds of thousands of Peronist sympathizers remained without a party and without their own candidates. Already in the elections of 1957, for the constituting assembly they voted massively "en blanco" (blank votes) there being more than two million such blank votes, in an election of eight million. It was obvious that whoever obtained the favour of the Peronist vote, now without leader and without party, would be the future president of Argentina. From exile in 1957, Peron had ordered the blank vote, and almost all sympathizers responded although this demonstrated that the Peronists scarcely constituted more than 25% of the electorate; nevertheless that 25% if not voting blank, could decide an election.

This is what happened. The Radical Party, the largest in Argentina, divided into two factions. One of them, the Radicals of the People, was of a middle-of-the-road tendency, rather liberal and strongly anti-Peronist. Its leader, Ricardo Balbin, had been in jail several times during the government of Peron. He was the presidential candidate for his Radical faction. The other faction, the Intransigent Radicals, strongly criticized some aspects of the policy of the government of Aramburu, and presented a "leftist" programme with strong nationalistic accents. Its leader and candidate for the presidency was Arturo Frondizi. The elections took place in February 1958. Frondizi won the presidency by a large margin of votes and his party won in all of the provinces, all of the Senate seats and two-thirds of the seats in the Chamber of Deputies. The blank votes practically disappeared - and it was evident that they had been thrown to Frondizi

There were accusations that representatives of Frondizi had made a secret pact with Peron, in his place of exile. In this pact it was alleged that certain advantages and concessions were promised to the Peronists. The provisional government and the military were under strong pressures not to turn the government over to Frondizi, under the pretext of this supposed pact with Peron; whether it existed or not we will never know with certainty. (It is certain that things happened as if it had existed to such an extent that a year and a half later, Peron and his people proclaimed that Frondizi had not fulfilled his part of the agreement, and the Peronists declared open warfare against the government of Frondizi.) But Aramburu kept his word, and on the 1st May, 1958, delivered the government to Frondizi.

All the country felt a breath of hope. People desired that the nation should definitely start forth on the road to peace, republican stability, and put an end to the era of revolutions and military coups.

The Difficulties Begin Again

From the beginning, the government of Frondizi found itself facing serious problems, from two sources: the Peronists who demanded, using all kinds of pressures and violence, (including terrorism, and the placing of bombs on railroads bridges, buildings, etc.) that measures be taken equivalent to the return of the Peronist regime without Peron. On the other hand, the military forces which had led the revolution against Peron (together with the opposition political parties, Conservatives, Radicals of the People, Christian Democrats, Democrats, Socialists, Progressive Democrats, etc.) had always regarded the government of Frondizi as guilty of collusion with Peronism, and, even worse, with Communism, because of its "leftist" programme and the fact that the Communists voted for the Frondizi government in 1958.

The Armed Forces remained watchful. The majority of its members demonstrate a tendency which has been called "legalist" wanting to leave political matters in the hands of the civilians, while a strong sector considered that the armed forces ought to remain ready to act against any threat to the democratic system or of the return of Peronism.

One of the first crises of the Frondizi government came after about six months; a period of internal dissention within the governing party terminated by the resignation (practically accusation and removal) of Vice-president Gomez. The country remained without a vice-president and in three years a replacement was not elected. This in itself created an abnormal situation for more than three years.

A short time later the Peronist Unions began to promote strikes and work stoppages, turning also to terrorism, which caused considerable damage and some deaths. Frondizi was obliged to permit the Armed Forces to take charge of vigilance and an emergency military law was enacted. Many workers who participated in the terrorist activities were judged by military courts and condemned to long sentences in remote points in the southern part of the country. This opened a chasm between the Peronist forces dominant in many unions, and the government.

On the other hand, the difficult economic situation showed Frondizi that his leftist and nationalist social and economic programme was impractical. It was inevitable that he should resort to economic solutions of austerity and of a "free enterprise" type. Monetary exchange was left unregulated so as to favour exports and to help in the recovery of agriculture and cattle raising. The country affiliated itself with international finance organizations, and obtained numerous loans from the International Monetary Fund and the World Reconstruction and Development Bank, and other private international banks. What the 'leftists' and 'nationalists' could never forgive in Frondizi was that he permitted the entrance of considerable foreign capital, especially North American, to develop the oil resources, and to establish steel plants, chemical industries and automobile factories and other elements essential for the recovery of the country. During the years 1959 to 1961, the economy of the country flourished again and economic activity reached its peak. The industrial production increased at an annual rate superior to that recommended by that of the international organizations; in two years the country supplied itself with oil and gas, there was work for all, (full employment) although there continued to be an annual inflation which meant that the cost of living increased from 20% to 25% per year. But the abundance of work and the high wages helped the people to face the situation. Nevertheless, in spite of the economic recovery, the government never enjoyed the confidence of many groups nor of the Armed Forces.

As far as the Peronists were concerned, the government of Frondizi had betrayed them. With respect to the other democratic sectors, he was suspected of leftist sympathies and it was thought that the change in the economic programme had been forced by circumstances and was not an expression of Frondizi's desire. Even the governing party experienced divisions since it lost the allegiance of many supporters who thought that it had not fulfilled its original programme, which in many respects was true, although one may ask if it is logical that a government should proceed with its plans even when it discovers that if applied they would bring the country to political and economic chaos. From our Protestant point of view, we can say that during the government of Frondizi, freedom of worship and the dissemination of religious ideas were respected fully, something which had not always occurred under the Peron regime. Nevertheless Frondizi fulfilled amply, at times excessively, the constitutional provision for the support of Roman Catholic worship.

Beginning about the middle of 1959, successive military crises continually threatened the stability of the Frondizi government. These crises occurred until March 1962, when the last and definitive crisis erupted. These crises always followed a pattern: a statement of demands by the secretaries of the Armed Forces to the President of the republic, asking him to rectify some measures: they led to numerous conversations and political and military meetings; there were some measures by the President, which partially assuaged the situation, and there was the resignation of one of the three military secretaries and of the Commanders-in-Chief of the Armed Forces. Generally such demands were due to measures or attitudes of the government which aroused suspicion: 1) of favouring Peronism, or 2) favouring Communism, especially in international policies (the secret interview of Frondizi with "Che" Cuevara, the Cuban minister born in Argentina; or the refusal to vote for the explusion of Cuba in the Organization of American States) or 3) activities and interference of what was called the "parallel government" formed by some of the private councillors and personal friends of Dr. Frondizi, all of them suspect of

being Communists, or at least sympathizers with Cuban Castroism and accused of promoting a policy of pressure upon the United States as expressed in the following declaration: "We only support the North American policy in the United Nations and in the Organization of American States in exchange for dollars". Frondizi himself even justified the existence of this "parallel government" by comparing Rogelio Frigerio, his principal advisor, with the memorable Harry Hopkins, personal advisor of President Roosevelt.

In the midst of all of these crises, the government of Frondizi increasingly lost authority, as much to the right as to the left and tried to save itself as best it could. A friend of ours clearly defined the situation in the following words: "Frondizi doesn't govern, he manouvers". About a year ago the majority of the residents of Argentina would have said: "Frondizi will make it until 1964" (the year in which he would have completed the legal term of office). Three or four months ago we would have said, "Who knows if he'll get there, and who knows whether he ought to."

The End of Another Constitutional Government

About 8 months ago, in September 1961, a commentator said in a Buenos Aires newspaper: "Legalism has prevailed until now. It is not, however, omnipotent. Between a government whose habitual method is confusion and an extreme opposition that doesn't believe in the decision at the ballot box, legalism could prove to be, if the tension mounts, an insufficient dike (barrier) and if this occurs, then indeed the revolution of September 1955 will have been frustrated."

What were the final events which precipitated the fall of the government? They were the elections for the replacement of those whose parliamentary terms had terminated and also those of the provincial governments in March 1962. The government of Frondizi lost the majority of the districts in the parliamentary elections of 1960. In these the Peronists once again voted "en blanco", and the Radicals of the People won. The government had by now permitted the Peronists to participate in the electoral process, although the parties which represented them in the different districts or provinces bore other names. Since in some of the provinces (Santa Fe, Catamarca, Formosa) the elections were advanced and the government won, Frondizi and his followers believed that they would win the rest of the country. But in the elections of March 18, the Peronists, employing anew the propaganda techniques and the threats of the Peron period, (and also the pictures of Peron and his songs) won the elections in five provinces, including the largest province of the country, Buenos Aires, (which does not include the capital city of the same name). In the city itself - the capital - the government won. The Peronists received scarcely 30% of the votes, but they triumphed due to the division of the democratic forces.

Great was the amazement in the country. Once again the country was threatened with what it believed had been dispelled in 1955: the return of Peronism. In addition, the Peronist participation in the elections had been illegal because a law prohibits advocacy of the Peronist regime, and the use of its symbols, pictures and songs, just as in Germany and Italy, Nazi and Fascist propaganda was prohibited after the War. The day following the elections, after the resignation of the Minister of the Interior, Frondizi intervened in the five provinces in

which the Peronists had won and declared their election nul and void. This increased the political confusion. In a democratic society, the anulling the results of popular vote is a crime. Who was responsible for this decision to anul the elections that had been free and supervised by the Armed Forces? This is a debateble point. Perhaps it will never be resolved. The supporters of Frondizi say that he signed the decree of intervention under pressure from the Armed Forces that had been sworn not to permit any sign of a Peronist return to power. The Armed Forces had alleged again and again that it was an exclusively Presidential decision. And there are many indications that Frondizi was prepared for such action if he lost tle elections to the Peronists. (It would have been different if he had lost to other parties, such as Radicals of the People - "Radicales del Pueblo" - or Conservatives, since he did not intervene in some of the provinces where these parties won, or in the province of Mendoza which elected a Conservative government in 1961).

To the illegal act of permitting Peronist participation in the elections, Frondizi added the illegal act of intervening in the provinces and anulling the elections. Also at no time did the Armed Forces protest the anullment of the elections.

However as a result of its actions the government lost its authority. The situation resulted in what has been called a "vacancy of power". The President occupied the Presidential Chair in the Government House, but could not govern the country. Even within his own party (only 25% of the electorate) there was and is a great uncertainty. The rest of public opinion repudiated him and the majority of the opposition parties asked for his resignation. This was true also of the Armed Forces. The crisis lasted eleven days only because there were those who interposed their good offices, especially General Aramburu, called by Frondizi himself, to avoid a solution by force. An attempt was made to form a coalition cabinet, but the opposition parties refused to cooperate. Aramburu himself recommended to Frondizi in a public letter that the only way was resignation. Again and again Frondizi refused to resign. Finally, in the early morning of March 29, the Armed Forces deposed Frondizi without physical violence and he was taken to the small island of Martin Garcia, a naval base in the middle of the Rio de la Plata, where he still is. On the same afternoon the President of the Senate, Dr. José Maria Guido, in the absence of a vice-president and in accordance with the provision for legal succession, was sworn in before the Supreme Court as President of the Nation. His government is only provisional, since he is not a president elected by the people, but only designated in a period of vacancy of power; new elections have been called for October 1963. Since developments have been peaceful in these last weeks, it seems very probable that the election date will be moved up to December 1962.

The new government has already experienced vicissitudes. There have been cabinet changes and the economic situation is very delicate. Already the economic recovery noted in 1959-61 seems to have been lost. Last year the country had a deficit of 45[illegible] million dollars in its commerical balance and the government has a deficit of 50 billion pesos (500 million dollars). The new minister of economy, Engineer Alsogaray, who was Minister of Economy during the period June 1959 to April 1961, is announcing measures to recover the lost pace. However, the most serious Argentine problem is not the economic problem, despite its seriousness,

but the involved and difficult political panorama. What does the future hold in store for us? We know that Peronism will be proscribed in future elections. To whom will the Peron sympathizers throw their votes? To the left, to the centre, to the right? Time and events will tell. The most serious danger, that of a military dictatorship of the Right, seems overcome, since the Armed Forces do not desire it, and President Guido has manouvered with skill to avoid its risks. The danger from the extreme Left is not evident for the moment but it would come through the formation of a popular front. However this front has no possibility of electoral success without Peronist support and the present Peronist leaders appear as moderates, as anti-Communist and reiterate again and again their "Christian social" position. This reveals the rise of a Peronism without Peron. But to what extent will the leaders be able to control and direct the masses? Here is another question difficult to answer. Let us hope that Argentina can find once again the road to political and social democracy and that this time it will embark on it with a firm and sure step.

THE PRESENT LIFE AND STRUCTURE OF THE CHURCH IN RELATION TO HER WITNESS IN LATIN AMERICAN SOCIETY

By

Prof. Richard Shaull - Princeton Theological Seminary

....the mystery of His will...to unite all things in Him, things in heaven and things on earth.
Ephesians 1:9-10.

My little children, with whom I am again in travail until Christ be formed in you.
Galatians 4:19.

We have become aware of the tremendous impact of rapid social change on Latin American society. For us, as Christians, such a moment has special significance, for in times such as this the nature of Christ's constant action in the world becomes more clear. In the midst of revolution and conflicts, the old world is being judged and is passing away. Through His Church, the Risen Lord is taking form in Latin American life and culture. The True Man, Jesus Christ, is building a new style of life for men, both as individuals and in their relationships in society. This life manifests itself in the Church and, through her, penetrates into all forms and spheres of each nation's life. We are already seeing the beginnings of this transformation and, despite the strength of the forces of evil today, we are certain that He who has begun this work will complete it.

But the same rapid social change which offers the Evangelical Church such extraordinary opportunities also brings problems and crises. Christ's taking form in a man and a people is a vital and dynamic event. It is the product of the presence of Christ in very concrete situations, just as, in His Incarnation, He took the form of a Jewish carpenter in a village of Palestine. It is the result of the transformation of a particular life and of a specific culture by Jesus Christ. But the tendency of the Church is to forget this fact and try to impose structures of spirituality, theology and conduct, of worship and community life, which are products of the Christ's transforming work in another situation or a previous era. When this happens the Church tends to lose her creativity, to become sterile and irrelevant. The more rapidly a society changes, the more rapidly these structures of church life become obstacles to the realization of the Church's mission in the world, as happened in the Church of Galacia, where the legalism of the converts from Judaism got in the way of Christ's work of giving form to human life there.

The search for new forms of life and ecclesiastical structure on the part of the Protestant Churches in Latin America takes on special importance today and demands our attention. In facing this problem, the witness of Church history is of the greatest significance. In other places and times we find situations similar to our own, in which all efforts to preach the Gospel and to serve Christ ended in frustration and futility, until the moment when the Church discovered more adequate expressions for her existence and witness in the world. But history also shows us that in precisely the moment when the situation seemed most desperate, the power of God was creating movements of renewal which would give new forms to the life and witness of the Church and open before her new possibilities of service in the world.

Think, for example, of the Franciscan and Dominican movements in the 13th century through which monasticism took on a new form and thus discovered how to be present in the new cities, relate Christian faith to a new mentality and serve Europe in a dynamic situation, in which the structures of the past were incapable of responding. We have the example of the Reformation in the 16th century in which the reality of justification by faith gave a new structure to human life and to the Christian community. In Calvin, we find the attempt to reform all aspects of the life of the Church according to the Word of God, and provide new forms for the life of man and society, based on the sovereign, redeeming action of God in the world. This effort had such relevance for that age that Calvinism oriented and shaped the life of a new social class in many European cities in the 16th and 17th centuries, provided the inner dynamic for its struggles and moulded the character and patterns of life of many leaders of social and political revolutions.

We could cite many other examples. It is sufficient to note, however, that the same thing happened when Protestantism reached Latin America at the end of the last century. In spite of the fact that it came from Europe and North America, Protestantism entered into a creative relationship with the culture and the life of the Latin American people in the historical moment in which they then found themselves. The relevance of its message and witness, together with its power to vitalize and transform men provided the basis for its initial impact and subsequent growth.

Let us examine rapidly three aspects of this movement:

1) The relevance of its message.

During the second half of the 19th century, many of the more progressive men of Latin America, who had grown up in a society dominated by the forces of Iberian Colonialism and Roman Catholic Clericalism, began to revolt against the structures imposed both on society and on their own thought and life. A yearning for freedom developed which lead to a search for new forms of thought, new systems of education and new political structures. Protestantism spoke to these longings; its preaching was Good News in that situation. It won the support of many representatives of the most dynamic forces of that age:- political leaders, Masons, intellectuals and members of the higher classes of society, and made a good number of converts from these groups.

2) The incarnation of this message in a new style of individual and community life.

Those who responded to evangelical preaching found, in the new Protestant community, a deep and meaningful experience of salvation which Roman Catholicism of that period could not offer. They discovered a new quality of life, as individuals and in community, which provided direction and depth to their whole existence. In addition, the pattern of congregation life which Protestantism brought offered unusual possibilities for the renewal of all social relationships in the small natural communities of city, village and plantation. Those who met together to study the Bible and pray, found in this relationship something they had never known before which made the church a decisive influence in the re-ordering of the life of the convert and in the nurture of the younger generation.

3) Service to the people of Latin America on the most advanced frontiers of the age.

It is impressive to see the way in which the liberal political leaders supported Protestant work. Many times, they invited missionaries to come into their countries to found schools and even to engage in evangelism. These leaders found, in the missionaries, allies in their struggle to change the mentality of the people, provide better education and develop democratic institutions. The focus of this service was the Evangelical School. In it, new attitudes were formed, thorough education was offered, new teaching methods were introduced, and model schools developed which had considerable influence on the life of various countries. One needs only to examine the annual school catalogues and commencement addresses of the directors of some of these institutions at the turn of the century to find evidence of this fact and discover to what extent Protestantism was in the vanguard in this field.

Today however, all this belongs to the past. The situation in Latin America has changed radically and the forms of life and service which formerly made such an impressive contribution are becoming more and more irrelevant. To the degree that we remain prisoners of these patterns, we will lose the opportunity God has put before us at the present moment.

1. The form in which the message was presented in that age no longer has the same relevance for ours. It puts us, in fact, in the position of answering questions which most people are no longer asking, and thus we fail to relate the message of Christ to the anxieties and concerns of our time. The majority of people I know in Sao Paulo today who represent the more vital forces in society - be they students, labour leaders or intellectuals - show practically no interest whatsoever in the teaching and preaching that goes on in the church - either Catholic or Protestant. When they get to the point of acceping me, in spite of my being a minister, they find it almost impossible to understand how anyone more or less aware of what is going on in the world can still be interested in religious ideas. They are disturbed by the poverty and misery of the masses and are convinced that radical charges must come in all areas of society. Usually, our preaching does not address itself to these concerns. They are almost completely secularized, and at the same time are victims of profound anxieties which can be overcome only in Jesus Christ. It does not usually occur to them, however, to turn to the Protestant Church in their search for salvation.

2. The style of life, both of the individual and the community, which formerly offered such deep satisfaction, is now losing its vitality. The Pietism which we inherited and which was such a creative force in the past, is no longer capable of re-structuring life in the face of the disintegrating forces of today. The Puritanism and legalism which have tended to dominate the moral life of Protestantism fall far short of offering an adequate structure for abundant life in the present situation. With the growth of the large cities and of those forces of disintegration which are shattering community life even in small towns and on the plantations, the structures of local congregational life become more and more inadequate. In a day which demands of the church nothing less than the creation of new forms of community life, the programme of the local congregation, which usually consists of two or three meetings each week and brings together people scattered throughout the city for worship and other activities, is completely inadequate. These activities lose the significance they formerly had as expressions of the common life in the Body of Christ and leave the church members isolated and insecure. Moreover, the general structures of church life - programmes and buildings, as well as the definition of the role of the pastor and laymen - may have been appropriate formerly in a more or less static community in a world in which social change took place slowly. Today they become a serious hindrance to the church's efforts to keep up with rapid social change, internal migrations, the rapid growth of cities and the population explosion. Only the Pentecostals seem to have discovered how to respond creatively to this problem.

3. The educational institutions - and other similar forms of service - which once put us in the vanguard, have now made us their prisoners. Our time, efforts and money are being used to maintain institutions in which the evangelical influence in the education of the younger generation is increasingly restricted and in which we become more and more identified with the conservative forces in Latin American society. We struggle to maintain institutions which easily become second rate, and which often tend to identify Protestantism with North America. Latin American Protestantism has opportunities for service on the frontiers in our time which offer exciting possibilities for witness and action, but until now we have done little to make the members of our churches aware of these possibilities much less to prepare them for this task.

We must not flee these facts or fear them. We can still live and work without worrying too much about them, but the day is soon coming when we will have to open our eyes to these realities. To face them honestly need not drive us to the point of frustration and despair. The foundation of the Church's life is the action of Jesus Christ, the Lord who is giving new form to human life and to the Church. This fact gives us the freedom to understand the present crisis in Latin American Protestantism, and to proceed courageously to the frontiers where the Holy Spirit is opening up possibilities of new life for His people. This is the extraordinary and frightening opportunity which God has given to this generation. We must accept it in all seriousness and in all trust. If this search for new forms of life involves us in difficult experiences, and failures, we also remember that here in Latin America we are in a privileged position where the opportunities facing the Church are tremendous, where the cultural and political situation is dynamic, where the Church has possibilities of renewal which cannot easily be found elsewhere.

No one can predict now where we will be led by this renewing power in the life and structure of the Church. We can, however, suggest a few points which may merit careful atudy.

1. The need to relate the Gospel to the contemporary world and to the life and culture of the nation.

The Good News of Christ is always the same, but the way in which it is presented and its meaning for man must be related to the concrete situation in which he finds himself. We have suggested above that in the work of evangelism we are faced with a new, revolutionary and secular mentality, and that we are called to present the message of Christ to people whose lives are disintegrating under the impact of contemporary social forces.

If this mentality seems hostile to Christianity, we must not be frightened by it. It represents not only a new manifestation of the perennial revolt of man against God, but also the present of Jesus Christ in the modern world. In the passion of man today to make possible higher degree of social justice for the masses, in his search for a richer and more deeper life than bourgeois society of past generations has offered him, even in his secularized attitude, we have some sort of reflection of the work of Jesus Christ in the human heart. For this reason, we can face our situation with trust and courage.

What is demanded of us is a constant effort to maintain contact with this mentality, to know existentially the human situation of our day and, in solidarity with modern man, to make visible the Good News of Jesus Christ, the possibilities for new life that He offers in the midst of this disintegration, and the meaning that He gives to life and history.

More than this, we must relate the Good News to the concrete life of our people and nation. With the rise of nationalism, the struggle of each country to discover its selfhood and have its own life and culture, Protestantism is being called to penetrate deeply into the psychology, the culture and life of each Latin American nation, in such a way that Jesus Christ can take a more Latin American form, and bring good news to each nation in its own specific situation. In another epoch, an Anglo-Saxon form of Protestantism related itself profoundly to the yearnings of the people. Today this same relationship can occur only through a continuing struggle to attain a higher degree of identification with the life, the thought and the culture of the nation.

In Brazil, we are beginning to be stimulated by this vocation. A new seminary is building its pre-theological course around the study of Brazilian reality. Future pastors will study Brazilian history, sociology, psychology, literature and folklore, in order to know themselves better as Brazilians and to orient their whole theological training toward the objective of discovering the meaning of the Gospel for the Brazilian man in the totality of his life. A professor in another seminary has just written an article in a theological journal about his efforts to make a contribution to the formation of a Brazilian theology.

This task of bringing our message up to date and making it relevant to Latin American life may demand changes in many aspects of the programme of our churches, especially in theological training both for pastors and laymen. With the present system, it is very easy to create a "ghetto" mentality, in which theological study alienates the future pastor from the most vital intellectual forces of the nation and from the national reality. We need to experiment in the search for ways by which the structure of theological education can be modified, so that the student lives in direct contact with these things and is constantly stimulated to relate the Gospel to them. We must discover how Protestant youth - future pastors and laymen - can receive the benefits of education without cutting the ties which bind him to his people and their necessities, preparing him to serve this people instead of being alienated from them. I have before me a book written by a French Marxist and a letter from a young ex-pastor of one of our Churches in Latin America. Both tell of their spiritual pilgrimage from Christianity to Communism, from Kierkegaard and Barth to Marx. It was Marxism which finally overcame their alienation and brought them to participate in the life and struggles of their people.

If we are to take this problem seriously, I believe it is necessary to re-examine our present programme of sending so many future leaders of the Church to study in the U.S. I do not mean to deny in any way the value of this preparation for many, but only to ask: If our urgent task is to understand the meaning of the message of Jesus Christ for our situation and our people, to discover how Christ can take the most visible form in the life of Latin America, why do we think that study in the U.S. is so necessary for this purpose? It could be that such study may in some cases do more harm than good, or at least that it may make our work more difficult in this sphere. Why not study the possibility of experimentation with some programmes of specialization and post-graduate training in the midst of our Latin American life, which might prove much more valuable and interesting?

2. The necessity of discovering new forms of individual and community life.

We have heard much during this week of the disintegration of traditional communities and the consequent disintegration of human life. In the Gospel, we have the message of Jesus Christ who takes this insecure, precarious life of modern man and reintegrates it. This means not only an emotional experience of conversion or a series of rules by which to guide one's conduct, but a total reorientation of man's whole being - thought, emotions, personality - around a new centre. The glory of the work of Jesus Christ has manifested itself in the appearance of a new kind of human life at the very moments when all such possibilities seemed to be completely exhausted: during the period of greatest decadence of the Roman Empire, in Europe during the 16th and 18 centuries, etc. We have seen in the Church and experienced in ourselves this style of life for our time, but the world still awaits clear and dynamic expression of it.

Our life must be life in community, and new structures of community life must emerge in the Church. In the Apostolic Church, we have indications of the nature of this community life; a total relationship among brothers in which they share their joys and sorrows; in which they sustain each other in hours of crisis, be these spiritual or material; in which each man finds an

orientation by which to make daily decisions and belongs to a group of men who, having dedicated themselves to the service of Christ in the world, live in community the supreme realities of the Gospel both in worship and the celebration of the sacraments, and the struggles of daily life.

If this is to become more real in the general life of the Protestant Churches in Latin America, in the new situation that we face, radical changes in structure are indispensable.

a) As one of the principle leaders of Brazilian Protestantism said recently, many times the total programme of the local Church is oriented in the wrong direction, when it tries to attract its members to an increasing number of activities in the Church, thus taking them out of the world. In reality, what the Church needs to do is to orient its programme so that it is present with men in the world where they are, preparing them for their mission there.

More than this, the presence of the Church with its members in the world must be structured within the natural communities in which men pass the major part of their time. If we examine carefully the history of the Church, we see that when she has been able to expand and make a major impact on the world this has happened. We have, as examples of this, the oikos, or patriarchal family unite, the basic social and economic structure of the Roman world in the first centuries of Christianity; the family in the 16th century, which the Reformers transformed into a centre of religious life, even in some cases going to the point of closing the churches during the week; and the congregation or parish as the centre of life in a geographically united community in the last century. To do the same thing today, it is necessary to form small communities of Christians in the natural, precarious and diverse communities of modern society - in neighbourhoods and apartment buildings, among students, workers and professional groups. The local congregation as it is constituted today might continue to exist, but with a vastly altered programme, as the home base for the orientation and direction of these other communities and a place where members of these diverse groups can enter into relationship with each other and live the reality of the unity which transcends all the world's divisions.

The formation of a new pattern of community life will oblige us to seek new definitions of the role of the pastor and the layman in the Church. In a recent meeting of Roman Catholics and Protestants in Brazil, a priest said that the major obstacle to the mission of the Church at present is that a mistaken conception of the ministry has produced what is almost a separate caste and has made laymen simply the recipients of grace. The Protestants in that meeting had to confess that they faced the same problem and that the biblical conception of the ministry was very different. In the New Testament, we do not have a few permanent positions which must be filled, but men who have received a great variety of gifts of the Spirit for the edification of the Body of Christ. The task of the Church is to recognize each gift and permit its expression. Only thus can the Church take form in the situation in which we are living; only thus can each of her members fulfill his mission in the Church and in the world; only thus will it be possible to define anew the task of the specially trained, full-time minister. Nothing is more urgent in Latin American

Protestantism than a modification of the structure of the Church along these lines, and consequently a constant effort to prepare each church member for his particular service.

Only through new forms of community life and the re-definition of the roles of minister and laymen will it be possible to meet creatively two problems which have arisen in our discussions during the last week. One of these is the dependence of certain churches on permanent support from North America. As the Pentecostals have shown us, a church needs financial aid from outside for the support of the most important elements of its life only when it has an imported structure which is not adjusted to the local situation. Such imported structures not only make inevitable a static and dependent church, but also hinder decisively the work of evangelism. If we are disposed to create Christian communities within the natural communities of the modern world and permit them to take on the appropriate forms for those situations, if we recognize the fact that in many places in Latin America the local churches cannot support full-time ministers, we will receive the necessary freedom, under divine providence, to find the most adequate forms for a truly "indigenous" Church.

Only the development of new forms of community which utilize the services of all members of the congregation will permit the Church to keep abreast of the tremendous population growth and internal migrations which are occurring in almost every Latin American country. This new phenomenon makes obsolete a pattern of evangelical development which puts too much emphasis on the building of large churches or which fails to utilize the services of all of the members in the work of evangelism and in the total programme of the church. If the Protestant Churches do not discover how to meet this new situation, they will have a relatively static life in a dynamic society, and they will not be able to meet the population growth.

3. More adequate expressions of our witness and service in the present situation of Latin America.

At present, the ideal which more and more engages the most serious men of the new generation is national development which can come only by radical changes in practically all of the structures of national life - rural and urban, cultural and educational, social and political. Many and diverse ideologies are involved in these struggles which will be decisive for the future of the continent and the Church. Under divine providence, Christians are scattered in all of the structures and professions in which this struggle is going on. The service of the Church in the present situation of Latin America is to be present in these places through her members, making a living, dynamic witness to Jesus Christ and His will for humanity.

The moment has arrived for the Church to recognize the importance of this vocation and to dedicate itself seriously to this task. It is not easy for the Christian to be present in these areas; it demands orientation, very serious preparation and the support of a community which offers him constant pastoral care. To do this also demands changes in the Church's structure and life.

The first step in giving priority to this task must be for the Church to free herself from the excessive burden of institutions, especially schools, under which she now labours. Our first task in education today is to discover how to prepare teachers and normal school students to make of their lives in educational institutions a true ministry. The sad reality we confront in Brazil is that, for all of our schools and colleges, we have not worked seriously at this type of preparation, not even with students and teachers in our own schools, not to speak of others. Only when we arrive at the point where we are willing to limit our committments for the maintainance of such institutions, will we find the time and the resources we need to do this other, more urgent work.

The presence of Protestants in the structures of contemporary Latin American life has two principle aspects: 1) Presence, as the servant of Christ, in the professional life of each country - as doctors and social workers, professors and engineers, industrialist and workers. 2) Presence of Christians with a profound sense of vocation, within political, labour and student movements, and other groups in the community in which the most intense struggles are going on at the moment.

In order to fulfill this task we must change the programme of the local Church, and especially of the men's, women's and young people's societies. It will be necessary to form small teams of people involved in each of these professions and movements, discover what the Church must do to be present in these groups and to put at the disposal of its members the resources of the Gospel and the means of grace. The Lay Institutes and Evangelical Academies of Europe, as well as professional groups and study centres in other parts of the world represent efforts of the Church to meet these necessities. In Latin America, we are under the urgent obligation to experiment along the same lines.

It will help very little to make the kind of analysis here attempted and to insist that Protestantism must be present in the world, if we do not discover how to create new structures of Church life which will make this presence possible. Our obedience in Christian witness in Latin America today may depend, to a very large degree, upon this.

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